

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 /039 W

-----130955Z 049107 /13

R 120758Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7679

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 6965

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, JA

SUBJECT: FONOFF EXPECTED TO SHUFFLE SENIOR PERSONNEL

1. SPECULATION IS AGAIN RIFE THAT MAJOR RESHUFFLE OF FONOFF TOP-LEVEL CAREER PERSONNEL, POSTPONED AFTER DECEMBER 1976 CABINET RESHUFFLE, IS IMMINENT. INSIDERS AGREE THAT VICE MINISTER SATO, DEPUTY MINISTER ARITA, DEPUTY VICE MINISTER FOR ADMINISTRATION MATSUNAGA, AND POSSIBLY ALSO DEPUTY MINISTER YOSHINO, ARE ALL DUE FOR NEW JOBS WHEN DIET CLOSES--PROBABLY EARLY IN JUNE.

2. SATO, HAND-PICKED BY PRIME MINISTER MIKI IN JULY 1975, HAS ALSO GOTTEN ON WELL WITH PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA AND FOREIGN MINISTER HATOYAMA. FOREIGN OFFICE CONTACTS RATE SATO AN ADEPT MANAGER OF POLICY AND PERSONNEL WHO HAS RESTORED HARMONY WITHIN THE MINISTRY. THOUGH MAINICHI SHIMBUN THIS WEEK TIPPED SATO AS NEXT AMBASSADOR TO SEOUL (CITING NEED FOR TOP MAN TO REPAIR TROUBLED RELATIONSHIP),
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MOST INSIDERS BELIEVE SATO WILL GO TO PEKING OR POSSIBLY ELECT "GOOD LIFE" IN PARIS.

3. ARITA IS HEAVY BETTING FAVORITE TO SUCCEED SATO AS VICE MINISTER. NOT ONLY WOULD THIS BE NATURAL SUCCESSION, BUT ALSO ARITA DIRECTED EUROPEAN BUREAU DURING FUKUDA'S 1971-72 TENURE AS FOREIGN MINISTER AND IS REPUTED TO BE

PERSONALLY CLOSE TO PM. AS "POLITICAL" DEPUTY MINISTER, ARITA HAS TRAVELED EXTENSIVELY ON SENSITIVE ERRANDS. MOST RECENTLY HE ACCOMPANIED FUKUDA TO WASHINGTON SUMMIT AND THEN WAS SENT TO BRIEF NON-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS ON CARTER-FUKUDA TALKS.

4. "ECONOMIC" DEPUTY MINISTER YOSHINO HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH MITI AND MOF COUNTERPARTS IN DEVISING JAPANESE STANCE ON ECONOMIC COORDINATION WITH DEVELOPED WESTERN COUNTRIES. HE IS MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED AS NEXT AMBASSADOR TO US IF ARITA IS NAMED VICE MINISTER. (ALTERNATIVELY, SHOULD YOSHINO GET VICE MINISTERSHIP, ARITA IS THOUGHT LIKELY TO GO TO MOSCOW.

5. MATSUNAGA IS REPORTED LIKELY TO GO TO TEHRAN, SUCCEEDING KATSUICHI IKAWA, WHO IN TURN WOULD BECOME AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE. MATSUNAGA IS KNOWN AS PROTEGE OF VICE MINISTER SATO. DURING HIS TENURE AS TOP ADMINISTRATOR OF FONOFF, WE ARE TOLD, TREND TOWARD CENTRALIZING POLICY COORDINATION FUNCTION IN DEPVICEMIN'S OFFICE HAS ACCELERATED.

6. RYOZO SUNOBE, FONOFF CLASSMATE OF SATO, WHO WAS RECALLED FROM JAKARTA LAST WINTER IN ANTICIPATION OF SEOUL POSTING, MAY STILL SUCCEED AMBASSADOR NISHIYAMA IN ROK. SHOULD SATO TAKE SEOUL JOB, SUNOBE IS THOUGHT LIKELY TO GO TO PEKING.

7. STRONGEST CONTENDERS FOR ARITA AND YOSHINO'S JOBS
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RESPECTIVELY, ACCORDING TO INSIDERS, ARE MASAO TAKASHIMA (CURRENTLY AMBASSADOR TO THE HAGUE) AND YSUYOSHI HIRAHARA (CURRENTLY AMBASSADOR TO OECD). TAKASHIMA APPOINTMENT WOULD BE READ AS BID TO DEVELOP RELATIONS WITH PRC AT EXPENSE OF USSR, INASMUCH AS HE ORCHESTRATED RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH PRC AS DIRECTOR GENERAL TREATIES AND THEN ASIA BUREAU SOME YEARS AGO, AND IS SAID TO HAVE EARNED CHINESE RESPECT IN PROCESS.
SHOESMITH

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